

Pressing the advantage home with Numara Track-It! to improve helpdesk efficiency

Missing a time slot may mean the next opportunity to print could only be days later. In the publishing world this delay could be catastrophic. Because of this, IT problems need to receive immediate attention, especially as the time to print approaches.

Business Driver

The need for an application which detailed reports on helpdesk activity with better reporting, more control, and the potential for improved internal workflow.

Industry Sector

Publishing

Why Numara Software?

Affordability and reliability. Long established record of success with earlier versions of Track It software.

Business Benefits

Faster and more efficient response times, customer satisfaction enhanced

Headquartered in Cape Town, with a regional office in Johannesburg and a staff complement of 300, Touchline Media is the largest South African publisher of international magazine titles. Its stable includes Men's Health, Sports Illustrated, Runner's World and Shape Magazine, as well as numerous specialist sports titles.

The high-pressure work environment at a publisher such as Touchline compels the IT helpdesk to give immediate attention to calls. A small hiccup close to deadline could lead to a publication missing its timeslot with the printers. "My team often has only minutes to attend to a query, so anything that cuts down on time spent resolving problems is extremely welcome," says Willem Swart, IT Operations Manager at the head office.

Swart needed an application from which detailed reports on helpdesk activity could be generated. Touchline's IT department has been relying on an earlier version Numara's Track-It! for the last five years. In 2007 they found it necessary to upgrade its system. The prospect of better reporting, more control, and the potential for improved internal workflow drew Swart to Track-It! Version 8.

"We have been using Track-It! since Version 5, with very good results. When we decided that it was time to upgrade, we also considered some other software offerings. Track-It!'s affordability and ease of use beat the competition hands down," says Swart. Track-It! Version 8 enables Swart to get the detailed reports he needs by making it easier and quicker for technicians to log all calls into Track-It! before work commences. "Track-It!'s colour-coding also makes it easier to track the status of incidents logged at the helpdesk, enabling me to better manage my technicians' time and make sure there are no



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unresolved problems falling through the cracks," says Swart. Using the reports to get an overall view of helpdesk activity, Swart can identify areas where helpdesk efficiency can be further improved. A standout feature in this regard is Track-It!'s Solutions Database, a self-populated central knowledge repository containing lists of problems and the quickest and most effective ways of solving them.

Swart: "Simultaneous to implementing Version 8 we also migrated our server database to Microsoft SQL Server 2005. We had a problem with integrating Track-It! with the new database, but a quick call to the local Numara office promptly ironed it out. We had an otherwise seamless transition from the old Track-It! to the latest version" The Microsoft .NET 2.0 platform that Version 8 is based on makes for a more user-centric software package. Users can import their preferred terminology and add their own custom fields into Track-It! for a better match to their environment. "Customisable to the nth degree, Numara's latest version of Track-It! offers a level of personalisation not seen in previous versions. If you're working on a project and there's a field missing, you simply create it. Easy as that!" says, Swart.

Swart says they implemented Version 8 in June this year, and immediately began seeing and feeling the benefits to helpdesk processes. According to Swart, 25% more calls have been logged since the new version was implemented.

"This is not because of more problems though. In the past technicians would often scurry off to attend to an urgent problem, and simply forget to log the incident when they get back to their workstations. Technicians were doing a lot of work, but this wasn't necessarily reflected in the system. Better data is giving us a clearer view of our pressure points and resources, enabling us to make better business decisions," he says.

"We realise that IT support requires a dynamic approach, and will continue to make improvements to the system where necessary. Numara's software will play a key role in this, and if ever we get stuck, we'll simply give the excellent support team at Numara a call."

Willem Swart,
IT Operations Manager